WITNESSES CALLED IN JFK PLOT PROBE

Trio Allegedly Knew of Suspects' Actions

Grand Jury subpoenas were issued Friday for three out-of-state witnesses in connection with District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Those subpoenaed to appear Feb. 1 and 2 before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury were identified as:

Loren Eugene Hall of Kernville, Calif.; Lawrence John Howard Jr. of Los Angeles, and Thomas Edward Beckham, a former New Orleanian presently living in Omaha, Neb.

Garrison said each of the three witnesses was "in a unique position to observe activities relevant to the assassination" of President Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. The district attorney said none of the three men were questioned by the Warren Commission, which conducted the official investigation of the President's death.

Garrison contended that Hall arrived in Dallas prior to the assassination carrying a .30-caliber rifle. Garrison added that this was "hardly an inconsequential matter inasmuch as he earlier stated that Kennedy should be killed." After the assassination, Hall returned to California, it is alleged.

Hall a bartender in Wofford Heights, Calif., about 125 miles northeast of Los Angeles, said Friday he intends to fight the subpoena "right down the line."

Hall admitted being in Texas during the time the subpoena noted and that he was active for one year in the "Free Cuba" movement in 1963.

DENIES CHARGE

However, he denied ever meeting Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby, or David W. Ferrie "or anyone else involved in the assassination or anyone ever men-

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JFK PLOT PROBE

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tioned by Garrison or anybody else."

Oswald was labeled by the Warren Commission as the lone assassin of President Kennedy. Ruby, a Dallas night club operator, shot Oswald to death two days after the assassination. Ferrie, a New Orleans pilot who died earlier this year, was implicated by Garrison as a co-conspirator with Oswald, Ruby and others in a Presidential death plot.

The subpoena for Hall said Garrison has information that he checked into the Dallas

THOMAS E. BECKHAM

Young Men's Christian Association in October, 1963, and remained in Dallas until the time of the Kennedy slaying.

It further contended that Hall was in Dallas with Jack Ruby "and other individuals believed to be involved in the assassination, that he brought a weapon to Dallas shortly before the assassination, that he was active in the 'Free Cuba' movement in Florida, Louisiana and Texas, that he was previously engaged in CIA-sponsored guerrilla training in Florida for raids on

LORAN EUGENE HALL

Cuba, that he was in association with Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas . . ."

The document also charged Hall contacted Ferrie in New Orleans before the former arrived in Dallas.

Retorting to Garrison's charges, Hall said he was in Dallas "for two days about two or three months before the assassination. I was driving through on my way to Miami and stayed at the YMCA for one night or two — I don't remember which."

He said he was in Louisiana "once, back in 1963 and that

LAWRENCE J. HOWARD JR.

was for about 3½ hours while I was driving through to Miami."

Hall said he spoke to only one man while in Louisiana — a Cuban who ran a laundry. "The guy used to be the head of the Cuban railroads under Batista," he said, but he was unable to remember the man's name. Batista refers to Cuban leader Fulgencio Batista, who

was toppled from power in 1959 by Fidel Castro.

Hall admitted being active in the "Free Cuba" movement, collecting equipment" from California, Texas and Florida and "executing raids on Cuba." The raids, he added, involved "blowing up bridges, starting fires in sugar cane fields, knocking out radio antennas — anything we could do like that."

He said the raids went on for about a year until a boat he was on was stopped by CIA agents. "They confiscated everything we had but let me go. I was never charged with anything," Hall asserted.

About his Dallas trip, Hall stated that he was arrested before he got to the YMCA. He said he was jailed "for one day for investigation — but for what I never found out. The charges were dropped. I was released and I went straight to the YMCA."

Hall denied ever bringing a weapon to Dallas.

The Beckham subpena charged that he was in association with Ferrie and various other individuals at 531 Lafayette st. The Lafayette st. address was identified as the same office building described as 544 Camp st.—the address used on leaflets handed out by Oswald in New Orleans during the summer of 1963.

Beckham's subpena contended he was further connected with Ferrie in that both were ordained priests in the "Old Orthodox Catholic Church of North America."

The subpena said Beckham operated a "Cuban mission" on Rampart st. and was "in active association with certain Cuban exiles in New Orleans in whose company Lee Oswald was seen."

The document said Beckham has knowledge of CIA-sponsored guerrilla training conducted near New Orleans, adding he has knowledge of intelligence activities occurring in the office of W. Guy Banister. (Banister was former head of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.)

LINK ALLEGED

It said Beckham was reported to be in Dallas in November, 1963, with one Cuban exile and that a number of those persons with whom he was in contact in New Orleans and Dallas "are believed to have played a part in the assassination."

Garrison, in his press release, said Beckham was originally from New Orleans and was an associate of Ferrie and Sergio Arcacha, former Cuban exile leader in New Orleans now living in Dallas.

Beckham, who lists himself as a bishop of the Universal Life Church and entertains with Western music under the name of Mark Evans, said in Omaha Friday night that he met Ferrie "for about 10 minutes—long enough to say hello and goodbye" several years ago.

MENTIONS MARTIN

He claimed he was introduced to Ferrie, "who had some supernatural stuff for hair," by New Orleans private investigator Jack Martin.

Beckham said that the only time he has been in Dallas was late last year, and was then accompanied by Dr. F. Lee Crisman of Tacoma, Wash., with whom he works as a psychologist and who manages his entertainment career.

After claiming that he had never met Oswald, Beckham said: "all I know is that President Kennedy was assassinated and Oswald was blamed for it."

Beckham said he does know Garrison and several of his staff members, adding that he worked as an investigator for Garrison for about three months in late 1962. He said there is no record of his employment because he was paid in cash. He said he also knows William Gurvich, Garrison's former chief investigator who resigned and criticized the DA's investigation.

Gurvich told The Times-Picayune Friday night that he doesn't "ever recall meeting a Mr. Beckham.

"He would never have had an occasion to meet me," said Gurvich. "I was not a member of Garrison's staff at the time Beckham claims to have worked for him. We travel in different circles."

REFUSE TO RETURN

Beckham said he will not return to New Orleans because "if I did I would destroy myself. If Garrison is sincere he can come up here and question me. I'm not running from anything and I'm willing to take a lie detector test."

Beckham said he was in trouble once in New Orleans when he was arrested for running a lottery in a church on Rampart st.

An offer of immunity by Garrison was greeted by scoffs from Beckham. "How can a man who's supposed to prosecute the law provide protection from it?" he asked.

The Howard subpoena indicated that he also knew Ferrie in 1963 during the course of several visits to New Orleans.

The document said Howard was engaged in CIA-sponsored guerrilla training in Florida for raids on Cuba, that he was active in the "Free Cuba" movements in Florida, Louisiana and Texas, and that he associated with Ferrie and others at 531 Lafayette.

If further stated that Howard checked into the Dallas YMCA in October, 1963, and remained in the city until the Kennedy slaying. It said he was in contact with Ruby and other individuals believed to have been involved in the assassination.

Garrison, in his press release, said Howard was also known by his "war name" of Alonzo Escurido. "In the early 1960s he was a close companion of Loren Hall's in guerilla activity in Florida. He later met Hall in Dallas in the fall of 1963," Garrison stated.

The subpoenas were issued by Criminal District Judge Matthew S. Braniff. Each subpoena grants the witness immunity from prosecution if he obeys the summons.

In his statement, Garrison accused the Warren Commission of trying "to hide the fact that for the first time in American history, a coup d'etat had occurred, resulting in the carefully planned execution of a President . . ."

He said President Kennedy "plainly was shot from a number of different directions."

He also contended that the American people have never been told the names of 10 men who were arrested in Dealey Plaza in Dallas minutes after the assassination.

"They later were quietly released after the murder of (police) officer (J. D.) Tippit, in another part of Dallas, provided the necessary diversion to cover their release," Garrison said. His investigation has identified some of these 10 men as participants in the assassination, he added.